4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

big courtyard gates, and having no windows to the street on the ground floor. Like all Oriental houses, they are only of two stories; the upper, which contains the living rooms of the family, being reached by an outside wooden staircase under cover of the broad pent of the roof projecting over the landing or gallery on which all the rooms open.

In more remote towns, such as Prisrend or Skodra, the streets look dreary and deserted in the extreme, besides being extremely narrow and ill-paved, if paved at all, and the bazaars and shops are exceedingly mean and poor. The furniture consists chiefly of a low divan with very hard cushions, a few chairs and a mirror, and the lime-washed walls are sometimes decorated with a dado representing a landscape, executed in the crudest possible style chiefly in one colour. A shelf often runs round the walls to hold the copper *ibriks* and other utensils, and above it are hung the rich assortment of arms which is the pride of every family.

In the mountain districts the houses of the beys are complete fortresses, being surrounded by high walls pierced with loopholes for musketry. Only in times of open hostility, however, is it necessary to take any precautions against possible foes, for an Albanian's notion of honour does not allow him to slay a man in his own house, deadly as may be his feud with him. The villages of these districts are generally remote from each other, perched in high and inaccessible situations. The furniture of the cottages is limited to a few mats and rugs, a *sofra*, the low stand on which meals are served in Turkish

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

fashion, a well-scoured copper pan to mix the meal in, a wooden bowl or two, a few horn spoons, a copper *ibrik*, or coffee pot, and a brass lamp. One of the two rooms is used as a storehouse for the maize or grapes, which are spread out and sprinkled with salt in order to preserve them. The other serves as general living and sleeping apartment, where the fire is made on the floor, the smoke escaping through a hole in the roof. Each house has its garden well stocked with fruit and vegetables, and its tobacco plot, surrounded by a high loopholed wall. Each village has, too, its green, in one corner of which is the paved threshing-floor, where the grain is trodden out by horses.

The physical appearance of the women of Albania varies according to the district they inhabit, the tribe to which they belong, and the conditions under which they live. The Skipetars of the Drin and the Gheg and Miridite women of North Albania generally are tall, handsome, and well-made, having good complexions and not infrequently fair hair, which, as the following verse from one of their folk-songs shows, is much admired:—

O maiden so tender,
No pipe of Vizier
Was ever so slender
As thou art, my dear!
The soft silken tresses
Of thy yellow hair,
The glad breeze caresses,
Like flax threads are fair.

They are also dignified in demeanour, capable of undergoing fatigue and hardship, and exceedingly courageous.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

if compelled to do so, in order to show how great is her regret at leaving the paternal roof.[1] In fact, her behaviour throughout is intended to typify her reluctance to exchange the single for the married state. Meantime the guests divert themselves with liqueurs, coffee, and sweets, and the performances of the professional musicians hired for the occasion.

About ten o'clock a cart arrives from the bridegroom's abode to fetch the bride's baggage, which is packed in a large wooden box ornamented with designs of flowers rudely executed. When it starts every one shouts, "*Per heir*" (Good luck!), and among the Christians, several women accompany the cart outside the gate, sprinkling both it and its contents with holy water. A few minutes afterwards, all the male guests invited by the bridegroom's friends set out, preceded by his father, who leads a richly caparisoned horse on which the bride will ride home. As they leave the house the women sing:

Happy may thy journey be,
Eldest of our family.
Holy sign of cross now make,
To the right thy way then take.
If to us thou bring fair bride,
May the sugar-plums taste sweet,
If a foul one by thy side
That they bitter taste were meet.

Arrived at their destination, the party range themselves around the courtyard, where glasses of cognac and water, and sweets and sugar-plums of various kinds

[1] The Mongols of Tibet observe a similar custom. See *Journal of Sarat Chandra Das*, published by the Royal Geographical Society.

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

CHAPTER III

THE ALBANIAN HOUSE

At its simplest an Albanian peasant's house was very simple indeed—no more than a small, square room with walls of undressed stones from the nearest stream; a man so poor had no money or time to spend on transporting better materials from a distance. The stones were bedded in mud and bound together every three feet or so by horizontal beams; in their turn the 'belts' were strengthened, particularly at the corners, by cross-timbers. The roof was a steep framework of timber covered with stone slabs but never with thatch or boards, for the house would stand no chance if an enemy flung a blazing firebrand on these. The doorway was low, but the wooden door, emblematic of the insecurity that lasted until Turkish rule ended, was strong enough not to be easily broken down from outside. In most cases there was not even a hole in the wall for window, and there was never a chimney—a ring of stones in the middle kept the log-fire in its place, and the smoke found its own way out between the rafters unhampered by a ceiling. A kitchen-crook, a most important article, was suspended over the fire from a tie-beam. The floor was of beaten earth. In sum, the house was the most rudimentary type of stone and timber architecture.

The furnishings were in keeping. They consisted of a three-legged stool or two, a box or pile of bedding but no bedsteads, a rough shelf with a frying-pan and a few platters and pots, a big metal jug for boiling water, an earthenware pot for holding drinking water, a round dining-table on stumpy supports about ten inches high, a flour-bin, a pan for mixing bread, perhaps a pan for baking it, and nothing for washing—the nearest stream served for that. A metal tray with coffee cups inverted to keep them clean and a tiny pot with a long handle for making Turkish coffee rested by the hearth, a few satchels of home-dressed wool and a distaff hung on the wall, and a hen stared at the company from her nest under the eaves. The only ornaments were yellow maize-cobs, rosy pomegranates, and strings of onions or garlic, all hanging from the tie-beams. At meal times a cat took up a vantage point under the

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EG1 Albania EG1

the housekeeper who remained discreetly out of sight behind the door where she handed it to the men. She must wash up but warned by the proverb which says of work done badly by firelight because there are no lamps, 'Evening's work, morning's laugh', she waited till the next day. Then her task was much less formidable than one might think. At both the men's and the women's table everybody ate out of a common dish, fingers were used for a meat course, and one and the same wooden spoon dealt with soup and any semi-liquid food that followed. The men generally had their own spoons as they thought this more hygienic; they washed them themselves—rather sketchily—immediately after supper, and tucked them into their breast, ready for the next meal at home or at a friend's. If coffee was served, the master of the house or his deputy rinsed out the cups, for the precious utensils must never leave the sitting-room in case the women took to drinking coffee. Twenty men could sup on soup, meat, bread, curds and coffee without the housekeeper's having more than three centre dishes and the dining-table to wash.

A multiple household might contain as many as twenty persons, a goodly enough number but only a pale reflexion of past glories. All over north Albania it used to be the custom for brothers, first and even second cousins to live with their wives and children, and probably several aged uncles and aunts and young sisters, under the same roof. Enormous housefuls sometimes resulted. For instance, there were sixty-four people in Gjon Macaj's house in Perlat about 1900, ninety-five in Isuf Isaku's in Zdrâjshë in 1923, and seventy in Lushan Sadrija's in Shalë even more recently. The houses themselves, though conforming to the regulation pattern of men's sitting-room, kitchen, stables, store-rooms, and one bedroom for every family unit, were remarkably small by our standards. Quite a little bedroom suffices for seven or eight persons if they all sleep on the floor, and both the sitting-room and the kitchen often served as dormitories, the former for men guests and the unmarried or widowed men of the family and the latter for women guests and the widows of the family. The primary cause of this way of life was the lack of public security in former times. Enemies and bandits could wreak their will on a single-handed man, but had to respect one surrounded by well-armed guards, and these the trustiest possible, his nearest relatives. After Albania became independent, public security improved so much that the need for a family to see

352 two transverse ledges nailed to them and serving as feet (Figure 11): low, three-legged stools and semicircular arm chairs; bedsteads of posts rammed into the ground, floors made of boards or intertwined switches, and heaped up hay or ferns (Figure 11); cradles which are
● 415 carried like a rucksack on the back. Among the kitchen utensil the baking bowl is important; it is made red hot and then the dough is placed in it and the baking bell is placed over it, on top of which embers are again heaped. Large wooden tubs with hoops of hazelnut are used to keep the wine, and smaller ones for water, butter, and brine for the cheese; sacks of sheep's or goat's hide are used to keep
354 milk. The open hearth fire, at the same time heating and cooking place, is situated in the center of the living room in a depression filled with loam; above it is suspended the kettle by a bent branch in its natural state, or by an iron chain; to the side of the fireplace a recess has been made into the wall to form a niche for the stove bench. Originally any kind of outlet for the smoke was lacking, then a hole for the smoke was left open, a flue was added; but it was not till later that proper fireplaces with a chimney were constructed.

/99: Illustrations./

/100/ The Albanians

II.

ooo 1. Woman from the Arbrie on the highland pastures of Kalmak. 2. Mohammedan Albanian. 3. Women from Scutari with wide breeches. 4. North Albanian shepherdess. 5. North Albanian woman with a wide apron. 6. Swimming bag and a raft of intertwined willow twigs floating on swimming bags; on the raft the swimmer's bundle of clothing. 7. Ferry made of a double canoe with planks raising the edge. 8. Canoe with booms on both sides. 9. Wooden plow. 10. Cross-section of a turbine mill. 11. Husking of corn by means of threshing flails. 12. Two-wheeled ox-cart. 13. Albanian from the region near Dibro. 14. Hand mill. 15. A pouch made of beech tree bark used for picking berries. 16. Peg with markings for water line use.

142 The Albanians are amply medium-sized, powerfully built, mostly with short heads, with a narrow, long face. Blue eyes and
ooo light hair occur not infrequently. In many cases the men shave their

1 [For illustrations, see 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, cat. 1116, p. 69a--Analyst]
2 [See 1: Karutz, El Europe, Cat. 1116, p. 67a--Analyst]

11: Start E-4 (no date) 1939 EF1 Yugoslavia
Albania EG1

291
415
531

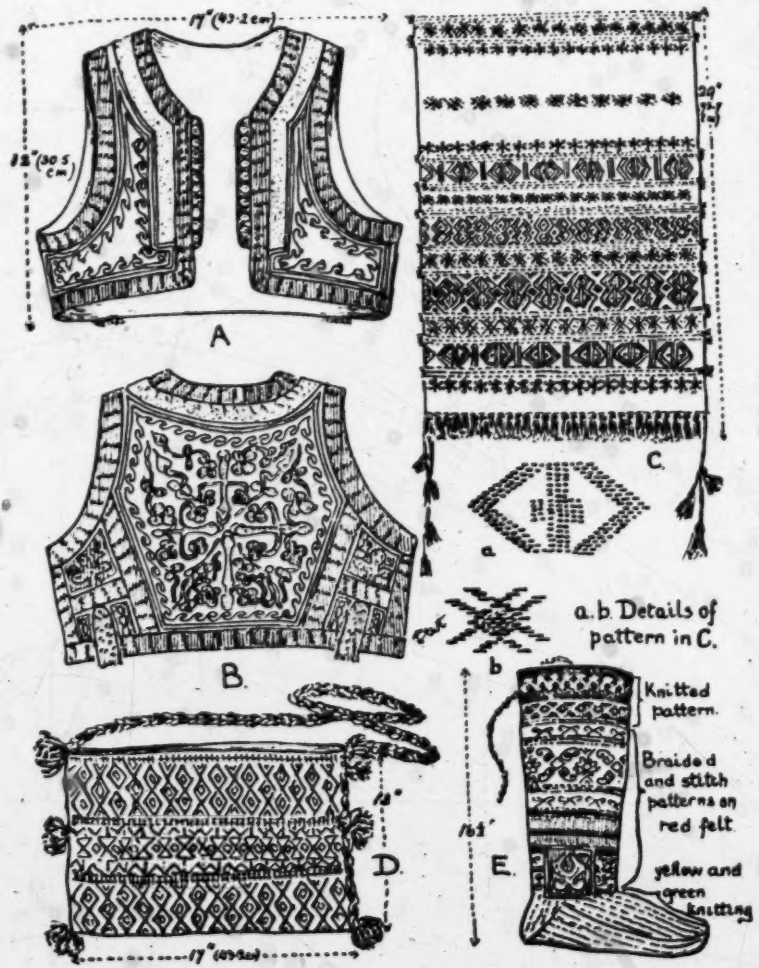

PLATE X.—A Zadrima woman's garments. A, B, Front and back of jelek. C, Half of head scarf. D, Knapsack market bag. E, Legging.

10: Lodge S-5 (1919, 1939)1941
EF6 Serbs
Albania E61

342 low-pitched roof is tiled in red, with dormer-like smoke-
712 holes, or tall, lidded chimneys. The strong wooden doors are round or square at the top ; the doorways often formed by lintels and side-pieces of wood, or arched with stone. Windows are few, and very small, often mere loopholes or slits a few inches across. Glass is rare : the openings may be barred by twisted twigs. In the stone houses they are often outlined by a frame of regularly shaped and spaced blocks. The guest-room is lighted by rather larger windows, which are nowadays generally glazed, though old-fashioned paper windows still linger in some parts. The side of the house facing the road is blind, though sometimes a few narrow slits are pierced just under the eaves.

342 The peasants themselves give as a reason for building
712 such fortress-like houses that they have lived so long in
627 dread of hereditary enemies, often very numerous because of the constant blood-feuds. These, like feuds in all countries, often arose over a woman, a runaway or a stolen wife. They said to me frankly : "Under Turkey we could pursue our wives, and kill them with their lovers ; but now we are forbidden to do this. A slit is wide enough for us to shoot through, not wide enough for us to be shot at. No enemy can see into the house through it, let alone climb in by it. And then a woman cannot go out by it to keep a tryst, nor can a man come in to find her." For similar reasons, all these dwellings have inside sanitation—small
[514] apse-like closets built of the same material as the house, and apparently clinging to it.

352 The ground floor contains the small dark kitchens where the women and children eat their meals. They have floors of hard earth, and fireplaces of the huge projecting kind, or
[354] small open fires with smoke-holes above, with a few cooking-
[415] vessels of baked clay set at their edges : the flour-chest stands behind the door. On either side are the storerooms.

343 An open-fronted shed holds the carts and ploughs, with the stables and barn not far off. The stable is lofty, its roof of bare rafters being continuous with the roof of the first floor, so that one may look down on the horses through the slits in the end rooms of this storey.